

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

ISTEA REAUTHORIZATION

• Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Mr. President, I would like to speak on reauthorization of the highway bill. I respectfully urge the Majority Leader to take up Senate Bill 1173—ISTEA—now. Let's not delay its consideration into the spring.

The State's highway programs are already operating under a temporary funding extension. I believe that further delaying consideration of S. 1173 will add more uncertainty to the States' highway construction.

As I mentioned, before this body adjourned last November, we passed a temporary extension of the highway bill, after repeated attempts to begin debate on the bill failed.

It now appears that floor consideration of S. 1173 may be delayed until after the Senate considers the Fiscal Year 1999 Budget Resolution.

I am second to no Member in my commitment to a balanced federal budget. However, I believe that we must also follow through on our commitment to quality infrastructure, and these two objectives are by no means mutually exclusive.

The current funding extension expires on March 31. That means that all federal highway funds will be cut off on May 1. Clearly, prompt action on ISTEA is critical to maintaining the flow of federal highway dollars.

Unlike delays last fall, however, these spring delays for ISTEA will occur in the middle of construction season. This will compound the disruptive effects of this halt on highway projects—and the jobs they support—around the country.

In the northern States, it is critical that construction funding flows at this time of year. The window for road construction work in many areas is limited by weather factors during the winter months.

Many states, including my own, have highway construction projects underway that are designed to reduce traffic congestion. This congestion worsens air quality, causes "road rage," increases wear and tear on vehicles, wastes fuel, and robs American businesses and families of valuable time.

Cutting off crucial federal funds for these projects undermines State efforts to deal with their congestion problems.

It is very unfortunate that highway fatalities continue to rise. By Federal Highway Administration estimates, poor road maintenance may contribute to as many as 30 percent of fatal accidents, resulting in thousands of deaths per year. Safety-related highway work faces stoppage if we delay consideration of ISTEA.

In fact, in North Carolina, 300 million dollars in safety projects may be delayed if federal funds are not approved.

I want to emphasize that these funds come from gas taxes collected every time Americans pull up to the pump. This "user fee" arrangement is supposed to ensure that these taxes pay for improving their highways.

Mr. President, 31½ billion dollars in gas taxes are collected each year, of which about 20 billion dollars actually goes towards highways. Even as we delay consideration of S. 1173, Americans pay their gas taxes in the belief that much-needed highway improvements will be funded.

Looking at the legislative calendar between now and May 1, when federal highway funds will dry up, there are 41 legislative days including Mondays and Fridays.

Even after we debate and pass a bill in the Senate, we have a conference report to complete.

Other issues are sure to be considered here, including potential military conflict with Iraq, IRS restructuring, campaign finance reform, and the budget resolution. That will take us well into April at best.

If we do not act on S. 1173 now, a lapse in federal highway funding is a virtual certainty. The presence of other important matters on the calendar only increases the importance of bringing up the Highway bill.

This is our obligation. It is our obligation to the millions of motorists who pay gas taxes, and the contractors, subcontractors and employees working on highway projects.●

RED CEDAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 50TH ANNIVERSARY

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the Red Cedar Elementary School in East Lansing, Michigan. The school began immediately following World War II in an effort to educate the children of G.I.s who moved to East Lansing to get an education promised by the G.I. bill. Since that time, Red Cedar has grown tremendously and has come to hold a prominent place in the East Lansing community. Because many of the students are from other countries, the diverse backgrounds and beliefs that make up the Red Cedar community provide for a truly unique learning environment.

This momentous occasion has been celebrated throughout the month of February within both the Red Cedar and East Lansing communities and will culminate on the evening February 27, 1998 with a reception and a dance for students, parents and other members of the community. It is with great pleasure that I recognize and congratulate the Red Cedar Elementary School on their 50th anniversary.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.●

DR. ROBERT A. REID, INCOMING PRESIDENT OF THE CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise to recognize Dr. Robert Reid, who on Feb-

ruary 16, 1998, became the 133rd President of the California Medical Association, the largest state medical association in the nation. With a membership of 35,000 physicians, the California Medical Association represents California physicians from all regions, medical specialties, and modes of practice.

Dr. Reid's medical career is both long and distinguished. For more than 25 years, he was a practicing OB/GYN, and is currently Director of Medical Affairs for the Cottage Health System in Santa Barbara, California. Dr. Reid has also served as the hospital's Chief of Staff, and was a member of its Board of Directors from 1991 to 1996. Dr. Reid is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetrics-Gynecology and Past President of the Tri-Counties Obstetrics-Gynecology Society. A former President of the Santa Barbara County Medical Society, Dr. Reid also served as Alternate Delegate to the American Medical Association.

Born in Milan, Italy, Dr. Reid is a graduate of the University of Colorado Medical Center. He lives in Santa Barbara, California, with his wife Patricia, and is the father of four grown children.

At a time of rapid change in the medical profession, Dr. Reid's leadership will be most welcome. I extend my congratulations to him, and wish him the very best in his term as President of the California Medical Association.●

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD AKER, DEVOTED PUBLIC SERVANT

• Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to the life and accomplishments of Edward Aker, of Adelphi, Maryland, who passed away last week of brain cancer.

Ed was an executive officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for nearly two decades. His service brought him posts in many countries, including Israel, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Pakistan, Somalia, Kenya and Tanzania. He was known by citizens throughout the Washington area and the world for his commitment to his mission, and his desire to help the underprivileged by encouraging economic development, humanitarian assistance and international cooperation.

Ed distinguished himself with his public service. He served in the United States Navy during the Korean War, and worked at a number of government agencies including Housing and Urban Development, the State Department, and the General Services Administration before commencing his distinguished career at the United States Agency for International Development. He graduated from the University of Maryland, received masters degrees from the U.S. International University in Nairobi and San Diego, and received a PhD in business administration from Pacific Western University.

Ed was admired by many for his patriotism, commitment to his family, dedication to his job, and uplifting